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## AMONG THE MAGDALEN ISLANDS.

THE Gulf of St Lawrence has its dark isle of woe as well as the Atlantic. Even as Sable Island is the Graveyard of the Ocean, so is the Magdalen group the Graveyard of the St Lawrence. But little is known of this group, which is not surprising, inasmuch as it belongs geographically, although not politically, to the least known (to Britishers) of all the provinces of the Canadian Confederation—Prince Edward Island. It is not a hundred years since an English writer described Prince Edward Island as a rascally heap of sand, rock, and swamp, fit for nothing but a military station and a potato-field; to-day, the island is frequently spoken of as the garden of British North America.

To the north of Prince Edward Island, and to the north-west of Cape Breton, well in the heart of the Gulf of St Lawrence, lies the little group of the Magdalen Islands, responsible for many a wreck, and notable for many things, although even the name may be strange to the average reader. It is placed, roughly speaking, about midway between the island of Newfoundland and the mainland of Nova Scotia, and therefore right in the track of southward-bound vessels from the St Lawrence, and of all, indeed, which do not find it convenient to make use of the Strait of Belleisle. And unlike that of the Bay of Fundy, which separates Nova Scotia from New Brunswick to the south of the Isthmus of Chignecto, the navigation of the Lawrentian Gulf is by no means safe at all seasons of the year. The Magdalens, again, face—although at a considerable distance—the entrance to the Bay of Chaleurs, which, of an average width of twenty miles, separates New Brunswick from the peninsula of Gaspé—notable as the point where Jacques Cartier found his first landing-place.

Gaspé, as also the Magdalens, the Bird Rocks, the islands of Anticosti and Brion, and the Seven Islands, all belong to the province of Quebec. To the north of the group with which

we are concerned just now are the large island of Anticosti, with a sub-arctic climate and flora, a dismal wreck-record, and elaborate life-saving appliances; the verdant Seven Islands, which Whittier calls 'the last outpost of summer upon the dreary coast'; and farther away towards the open Atlantic, the little island of Meccatina, where the Huguenot Robernal abandoned his niece, Margaret, and where he left her in lonely banishment for two years, after losing her lover and her duenna, until she was rescued by a passing vessel.

About three hundred and sixty years ago Jacques Cartier set forth from St Malo with two little ships of sixty tons each, to find out more about the strange lands of Newfoundland and Labrador, discovered by the Cabots and Jaspard Cortereal. He left St Malo on the 20th of April 1534, and passing through the Strait of Belleisle, sailed along the barren coast of Labrador and all round Newfoundland. He then shaped his course to the south-west, and found the Magdalen Islands, upon which he landed to explore, there-after sailing still to the west until he entered the Bay of Chaleurs, so called by him because of the tremendous heat of the July day on which he was 'the first that ever burst into that silent sea.' He landed on the rocky peninsula of Gaspé, and there planted the flag of France, in token of possession. It was not until the next year that he entered the river St Lawrence, and called it so because it was on the fête-day of the saint that he began the ascent of the stream.

The Magdalens, then, are directly associated with the real discovery of Canada by Cartier, and have thus an historical interest of their own—just as Sable Island has, as the scene of the first actual European settlement in North America.

The Magdalen group consists of four islands, the nearest land being Cape Breton, about fifty-five miles off. The islands are named Coffin, Saunders, Wolfe, and Amherst, the largest being Coffin Island. The population in 1871 was 3172: it is now estimated at about 6000.

When Jacques Cartier discovered them in 1534,

he reported the islands as well wooded and verdant, with large tracts of meadow-land alternating with swamp and forest. Little of these forests remain, for the fine trees of the Magdalens yielded such excellent timber for building purposes that they have been practically all used up. Only a few stunted clumps of fir and spruce may now be seen where once were magnificent groves; and indeed so short is now the supply of wood on these once sylvan islands, that the inhabitants are now compelled to import coal for fuel.

The physical aspect of the Magdalens as seen from the sea is imposing enough. They present to the eye a succession of towering cliffs, rising apparently sheer from the sea to a height of from two hundred to four hundred feet. Against these cliffs, the long rollers of the Lawrentian Gulf, after their chase across the Atlantic, beat ceaselessly and angrily, so that the islands seem to be swathed in a perpetual setting of seething foam.

A constant warfare between sea and land is here in progress, and now and again one finds that the sea has been victorious, and has hammered at the base of some grand cliff until the rock has collapsed and mingled its fragments with the strand. On one side, indeed, the sea seems to be wholly victorious, and to be gradually winning possession; but elsewhere one finds quiet lagoons and marshes, which are being slowly formed into dry land by the distributed debris of the shattered cliffs. Thus a constant process of disintegration and reconstruction is here in progress, in marked contrast to the disintegrating process which threatens—or promises, one should rather say with regard to such an area of sorrow—to sweep Sable Island in time into the bottomless ocean.

Although discovered and much admired by Cartier in 1534, the Magdalens do not seem to have attracted any settlers for more than two hundred years. At all events, we find the first evidence of a French settlement about the year 1757—a settlement of ten families engaged in hunting the seal and the sea-horse, and in fishing for cod and herring. Six years later, in 1763, the islands passed, with the rest of what was then known as New France, into the protection of the British Empire. Thirty-five years later, a grant of the islands was made to Sir Isaac Coffin for his naval services during the American war of Independence, less one-seventh of the produce reserved for the support of the church and the clergy.

From then till now the Magdalens have remained in the possession of the Coffin family, notwithstanding the desire and repeated attempts of the Government of Canada to buy them back. The Coffin family cherish the property as a gift of honour, and attach a higher sentimental value to it than the Government are willing to express in dollars.

Between 1871 and 1891 the population of the Magdalens about doubled. Last year it was computed at about six thousand—all French-Canadians with the exception of some five or six hundred English-Canadians and settlers from Jersey. The English inhabitants are engaged as farmers and tradesmen; the French as fishers and merchants.

When Cartier discovered the islands, he re-

ported large numbers of sea-monsters along the shores, with two tusks in their mouths. These were the walrus, although he did not know it, and the early settlers found its pursuit their most profitable occupation. Generally speaking, the walrus was then regarded among mariners as only second in value to the whale; but there was no whale-fishing at the Magdalens. Walrus oil always brought a good price in those days; and then, besides the value of the tusks as ivory, there was the value of the hide for leather. Altogether, walrus-hunting was so profitable that it resulted very much as the Americans fear will the hunting of the fur-seal in Behring Sea—in extirpating the species. At all events, the walrus has been practically driven away by the hunters from the Magdalens, only an occasional specimen being now seen in place of the sportive shoals observed by Cartier.

The hair-seal, however, is still hunted with assiduity and with profit, and the exports of seal-oil are valued at from three thousand to four thousand pounds per annum. Cod are caught in large numbers in the surrounding waters, and form the basis of a permanent industry. Herring, mackerel, and lobster are also fished, but with less steadiness. Of late the curing of lobsters has been introduced, and promises to become a considerable industry.

We have said that geographically the Magdalens belong to Prince Edward Island, to which fertile land the soil of the Magdalens bears a remarkable resemblance; and the fertility of Prince Edward Island is proverbial. The usual crops are oats, hay, and potatoes; and rich old grass-lands have yielded crop after crop of hay without any more trouble than the ingathering. On such fine pastures stock ought to flourish; but the native breeds, presumably the descendants of the first French settlers, are not very good, and an infusion of Prince Edward Island stock has been of late imported with a view to improvement. Fruit does not flourish since the islands were deforested.

The people are poor, but well conditioned—uneducated, but honest and industrious. They are noted for their native courtesy to all, and for the domestic virtues of the women. The female Magdaleners seem Jacks—or Jills—of all trades. They help in the fishing and in the garden, mend the nets, plough the fields, spin the wool of their sheep, weave it into cloth, make clothes for the whole family, and fill up their odd moments with cooking, washing, and knitting.

As on the island of Tiree, there is no licensed house in the Magdalens. It does not follow that because liquor is not publicly sold, it is not drunk. But there is certainly no drunkenness, and the Magdaleners are naturally a sober people. Their chief luxury is tobacco, and so universal and extensive is its use, that it may almost be ranked by them as a necessary rather than as a luxury. It is said, however, that the Magdaleners are remarkably superstitious, and have a profound belief not only in the personality of the Evil One, but also in his personal intervention in affairs of individuals, even to the extent of his meddling with the working of the fishing-boat, or assuming the guise of a friend—with intent to deceive.

The whole appearance of the Magdalens near at hand is suggestive of prosperity—when the white buildings of the homesteads and the marts of the fishing-boats are sighted. But in the distance they are dreaded by the navigators of the Gulf of St Lawrence, especially in certain winds, when the set of the currents makes it a difficult thing to avoid impalement on the jagged rocks of these islands. Shipwreck here, too, implies both total loss and frightful mortality. The sands of Sable Island are slow, if cruel; but these rocks are swift at destruction, and not many hours elapse after a vessel strikes until she beats herself to matchwood. If she does get off, it is only to founder immediately in deep water.

The life-saving appliances are extensive and well planned. The points are well marked with lighthouses; rockets are placed at numerous suitable stations, and the whole system is united by telegraph wires. One reason why the Canadian Government wish to re-acquire the islands is to take still greater precautions against their being the death-trap of the mariners of the St Lawrence.

### THE BURDEN OF ISABEL.\*

By J. MACLAREN COBBAN, Author of *Master of His Fate*;  
*A Soldier and a Gentleman*; &c.

#### CHAPTER XV.—PLANS AND PROSPECTS.

WHEN Uncle Harry was gone, Isabel turned her thought again to her father with a new cheerfulness and prospect. If she could contrive to reconcile the brothers, might not they yet live, all three, in happy concord? But she could not yet attempt to bring them together: she must first know her father better and effect considerable improvement in his health and conduct. At present she must act, and neither speculate nor dream. She arrayed herself with care—for she felt it would be an advantage with her father to please his eye—and then went out to take the train to King's Cross. When she left that station she made several purchases, and then entered the bus for New North Road. Arrived there, she looked about for a fishmonger's; and having given an order she went on to her father.

When she was over against Mrs Ackland Snow's she was met by Mr Doughty, newly shaved and brushed. He made her an elegant bow, and walked on by her side, halting a little on his stick. His conversation was impressive, solemn, and somewhat lugubrious. The chief had spent a bad, restless night, and so had he. Had her father, Isabel asked, eaten well? He had eaten the usual 'meal of resistance' about two o'clock—an overdone chop, and little else. But what Mr Doughty chiefly wished to utter at the moment was his unbounded gratitude for what Miss Raynor, he was morally certain, intended to do for her father. He loved and revered the chief—he had been with him for more than twenty years in all variations of temperature and weather—and all he asked for himself was that

he might not be completely cut off from the society of the chief, that he might be allowed occasionally to see and speak with him. And yet another boon he asked.

'I have had a scene with the chief,' said he. 'He wished to know how you found him out, and he asked me full in the face if I had written to you. With his eyes on me I could not prevaricate, as, I confess, I had intended to do: it is an astonishing thing that you *cannot* prevaricate to those eyes of his. I admitted I had written to you. Do not, I beg of you, let him learn that I have written oftener than once; for he would never forgive me if he knew.'

As Isabel entered the little parlour, she saw her father sitting where she had left him the night before, wrapped in an old overcoat, and reading a book. When he rose to greet her, she perceived that he looked gray and pinched with fatigue; and she noted, moreover, that her appearance had called forth in him a dim gush of tender emotion, which passed upon his countenance like a breath upon a mirror. He appeared shyer with her than he had been the night before, and she felt—as only a woman can subtly feel—that he regarded her presentment with distinct approval.

'I knew you would come,' said he, taking both her hands in his, 'but I did not expect to see you so early. Will you excuse me for a minute?'

He retired into an inner room, and Isabel laid aside her hat and jacket, turned to Mr Doughty in haste, and begged his assistance in setting forth the table. Mr Doughty was appalled; for there was, as he said, 'a precarious and perplexing litter' on the table of books and papers. The table was at length cleared, however; and with the aid of a girl tempted up from the basement, who smiled on Isabel in surprise and admiration, the cloth was duly laid. Mr Doughty's spirits gradually rose, till, when Isabel had set out a fowl all ready cooked, bread and butter, and a lettuce and herbs for a salad, and had exhibited a bottle of Burgundy and asked him to draw the cork, he exclaimed: 'Really, Miss Raynor, you appear to me to have made provision for a feast of Apicius!'

There were no wine-glasses to be found; but Isabel thought tumblers would do, and Mr Doughty readily agreed with her; and delicately and lovingly, with just the proper twist, like a father drawing his child's tooth, he drew the cork of the Burgundy.

'Please, 'm,' said the little maid-servant, bursting in, all aglow with excitement, 'here's the winkles!'

'The winkles!' exclaimed Isabel.

'Yass, 'm. The boy's jes' bring 'em from the fish-shop!—on a tray!—such a lot! They do look nice!'

'Oh, the oysters,' said Isabel, and went with a dish to receive them.

'Oysters!' exclaimed Mr Doughty as she went out. 'Let me see; how long is it since the chief and I have tasted an oyster?'

At that instant the chief himself re-entered, clean and clothed, and stood in surprise. He

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did not speak, but his bright eye—bright and open as a child's—quickly compassed the meaning of the display. When his daughter reappeared, bringing in the oysters, tears sprang to his eyes. 'You should not have done this,' he said. 'It is very good of you, but we ate abundantly a few hours ago: did we not, Alexander?'

'We did,' answered Mr Doughty—'sumptuously;' but he added the saving phrase, 'for us.'

'Abundance is relative, father—is it not?' said Isabel with a bright smile. 'But we can talk of that by-and-by. Discussion may, but oysters must not, be kept waiting. Let us sit down and eat, father.—Mr Doughty, will you look after the wine? You understand it.'

She shrewdly guessed her father liked the turn of her phrases, and she had assurance of that when, surveying her deliberately with pride and pleasure, he said: 'I believe you are a very clever girl, my dear. And I have a conviction that a new epoch in my life has begun.' He pressed her hand, and a tear again moistened his eye.

'Now let us eat,' said she.—'No vinegar for me, thank you,' she remarked presently to Mr Doughty. 'I prefer their native flavour.'

"Native flavour," said her father, 'is a good phrase—doubly good.'

'It is certainly "doubly good,"' crackled Mr Doughty; 'for it includes'—

'Oh, pray, Alexander,' exclaimed Mr Raynor, 'do not explain why!—My excellent friend Alexander, my dear,' said he to his daughter, 'has a poor opinion of the human understanding: he always spreads his meaning out in plain, large type.—Really, my dear,' he went on, 'these oysters are extremely good. They help to demonstrate that "Appetite doth grow by what it feeds on."'

'Which is more than can be said—is it not?—for your usual diet, father,' said she. 'Your diet is commonly too abstemious, I believe.'

'No, my dear,' said he; 'I think not. No; we have pretty fairly divided our tastes between the flesh-pots of Egypt and the onions, the leeks, and the garlic—have we not, Alexander?'

'I would exclude the leeks and the garlic, sir,' said Alexander: 'they did not, I believe, come in our way.'

'You are literal, Alexander,' said Mr Raynor.

'I hope,' said his daughter, 'they were at least well cooked.'

'No, Miss Raynor,' said Mr Doughty with feeling; 'they were very ill cooked, indeed, I assure you.'

'That's a pity,' said she; 'for good food well cooked is the source of most of the virtues of men.'

'My dear,' said her father, considering her again with a smile of delight, 'you are a very clever girl, but you appear to have taken up with a very materialistic philosophy.'

Thus their talk went on in apparently aimless fashion, though Isabel, for her part, had a distinct end in view. She had quickly perceived that talk—bright, easy talk—was more to her father than meat and drink, and she had resolved to indulge his taste to the best of her ability, even as she had already determined—will he,

will he—to feed him with nourishing food—all that she might have complete influence with him and gradually build him up again into the stature of a man. Her father well said that she was a very clever girl.

So they talked, and Isabel all the while kept a watchful eye on her father's plate and glass. When they were nearly empty she did not ask him if he would take more, but she quietly replenished them, so that he was not aware what she was about. It was only when his plate was quite cleared and his glass empty—when the salad was all eaten, and the wine all drunk, and when there remained nothing of the fowl but a dismembered skeleton—it was only then that he came to himself.

'The food you have provided, my dear,' said he, 'has a magical effect. I do not seem to have taken much meat and drink, but yet I feel like him who—"on honey-dew hath fed, And drunk the milk of Paradise."—But now let us talk of our plans.'

Mr Raynor left the table and sat in his old easy-chair. 'Let us see,' he said resolutely. 'Of course, my dear, you cannot come and stay here. I think this household is not conceived on such a scale as would admit of it; and the cooking is not good; certainly,' he added with a reflective eye on the table, 'it is not good; and the beds are not soft enough for a lady to lie on.'

'I like a hard bed, father,' said Isabel, humouring his bent.

'You would not like our hard beds here. They are not merely hard: they are rocky. Why, mine often feels to me like a pavement of cobble-stones. I lie down a man, and rise up a bruise. No, this house won't do.—Alexander, we must find other and better rooms. We shall require three bedrooms and a sitting-room, or even a couple of sitting-rooms—a larger and a smaller. I think it might be a good idea to inquire the rent of a flat, Alexander. What do you think?'

'I will inquire, sir,' said Alexander, 'if you desire me to.'

'Now, what rent do you think we can afford, Alexander? Give me a sheet of paper and a pencil—will you?'

Alexander found these articles, and handed them solemnly to him while he continued talking. He reckoned that he and Alexander could earn five hundred pounds a year; Alexander suggested it would be better to say four, but his chief did not agree with him; for, when you are once about it, five is as easy to get as four. So he seriously set himself to calculate on this imaginary basis of income what amount might be disbursed for rent, what for food for three people—and a domestic—and what for clothes and pocket-money. And Isabel sat and listened; she understood her father better than before, and she now perceived how little able he must ever have been to take care of himself and to battle with the world. 'And yet,' she said to herself, 'how sensible he is in his imaginings!—and how well he means, the dear father!—and how generous he would be if he could!' It was, of course, perfectly plain that he intended now to assume the responsibility of his daughter and all her needs—he even presently hinted that it would



be well so to regulate expenditure that something considerable might be put by every year to make a marriage portion for her—and Isabel had not the heart to show that she doubted very much whether any income—to speak of—would be earned by him. She let him think—she believed it would be good for him to think—that he was now about to keep his daughter, and that she was dutifully going to accept his protection.

'You do not ask me, father,' she said, 'if I have any views on this matter.'

'Yes, sir,' said Mr Doughty readily. 'You had better listen to what Miss Raynor may have to say. She is quite as wise in these matters—perhaps wiser than we are.'

'Certainly, my dear, certainly,' said he. 'Forgive me,' and he prepared to give instant heed to what she might say.

'I would like to point out, father,' said Isabel, 'that before we can occupy a flat we must have a tolerable amount of furniture, which will cost a good deal of money at once.'

'True, my dear,' said her father humbly; 'I had not thought of that. I perceive my lapse of actuality.'

'Therefore,' continued Isabel, with inexorable logic, 'we cannot think of occupying a flat for some time. If we try to find nice furnished rooms—that, too, would take some time.'

'Would it, Alexander?' asked her father.

'Some time, certainly,' answered Alexander.

'Now, I have a plan which will work till something better is got ready,' pursued Isabel. 'I cannot come to you here, father, but you can come to me. I have lodgings in a very nice house, and I can arrange for rooms for you and Mr Doughty. That would entail no delay; for you can come at once.'

'At once!' exclaimed her father, turning pale at the thought of having to take immediate action. 'At once,' my dear, is very sudden.'

'To-morrow, then,' said Isabel; and, though exciting, that suggestion did not seem so disquieting as the other: he was prepared to discuss it. 'Let us talk about it, my dear,' said he. He doubted whether the landlady would like it; and he doubted 'the equity and prudence' of so sudden a move; and so on.

Isabel was good-naturedly ready to discuss it as much and as frequently as he liked; but she had made up her mind that her father should come to her on the morrow—she would arrange with Mr Doughty to bring him—for she clearly perceived that he, if left to himself, would discuss the matter subtly and casuistically over and over again—and never stir.

When Isabel left her father it was about nine o'clock. She rode from the New North Road to King's Cross outside the omnibus; for the night was warm and fine, being well into June, and the interior of the 'bus would, she knew, be unbearable. She was in high spirits when she set out, with the prospect of success in her mission to her father, and her elevated ride raised them still higher. The air was bland and cool, and the view which spread before her as she descended Pentonville Hill, with the gorgeous, transfused, smoky effect of a London sunset behind the distant pinnacled mass of St Pancras Station, somehow encouraged hope. The world appeared to her very beautiful; even the world of sordid houses

and swarming men and women and children around her was glorified by the mysteries of Life and Love. Her thoughts, of course, mainly dwelt on her father, but, by a subtle and—at first sight—not very apparent connection, they also embraced Alan Ainsworth. She had been led to think of him a good deal during the last day or two, mainly by the coincidence that he, too, was a journalist, as her father was, or had been. Her knowledge of Alan Ainsworth, also, suggested to her the kind of alert, sensitive being her father must have been in the spring of his days, and bound the two together in a common interest in her mind. If the two only knew each other, what a pleasant association it would be! She imagined them sitting over against her, and discussing all things of interest on earth and in heaven—Literature and Art, 'Faith and Free-will, Foreknowledge absolute.' And the best was that she did not put away this picture as impossible of realisation, because she knew that Ainsworth was coming to London, and that sooner or later she must meet him.

Science has had much to say lately concerning the circumambient ether—that it is the subtle medium for the transmission of light and heat, that it is, probably, the element of electricity, and so forth. If the wonderful ether be all that, if it vibrate with light and heat, why should it not vibrate with love, which is of the essence of heat and light combined? Why should it not subtly vibrate and communicate between one heart and another? It is certain that at the same moment when Isabel Raynor was thinking of Alan Ainsworth, Alan Ainsworth was thinking of her—though it must be admitted he had more sedulously thought of her during the last day or two than she had thought of him. He was in London, and had got to work. He had been very much occupied, but yet he had found time to hang about the College for Ladies and the neighbourhood where he knew she lodged, on the chance of encountering her. He longed with all his impulsive soul to see her and to talk with her, though he did not know he had anything particular to say. He had written to Suffield as soon as he had arrived in town; but he had not yet heard from him; and he waited and longed. On this very evening he had walked out of his lodgings to eat his evening meal at a café at King's Cross. He had eaten his food to the accompaniment of chiming thoughts of work and of Isabel; and he had walked out with such thoughts still chiming in his mind, when he chanced to look up and see Isabel descending upon him, as it were from above! Isabel, we know, held a return ticket from King's Cross to Baker Street, and she stood for an instant on the pavement in hesitation whether to descend into the sulphurous atmosphere of the Underground or to sacrifice her ticket and walk the remainder of the way—she stood thus when she became aware of a tall man regarding her from a step or two off. As soon as her eye lighted on him the tall man smiled and approached with his hand out. It was Alan Ainsworth.

'So we have met again,' said he. 'I am very glad. I have been hoping to meet you; but London is such a great place everybody that lives in it seems to revolve in a wider orbit than usual, so that it may take years to cross a friend's course,

We will get jostled about if we stand here. Which way are you going, Miss Raynor?

'I am on my way home to my lodgings,' said she; 'and I was just considering when I saw you if I should go by train or walk.'

'Oh, walk—please, walk,' said he; 'that is, if it is not too far, and if I may accompany you.'

'It is not so very far,' she answered quietly, though she perceived his eagerness and delight, and though these feelings in him gave a nameless delight to herself. 'My rooms are near Baker Street. But I would not like to take you out of your way; and you may be busy.'

'My way lies westward too; and I am not busy. And even if I were, that would not matter. I have been wishing to meet you, and I've met you.'

'But,' said she with a smile, 'you have not been long in London, have you?'

'Two days,' he answered—'two whole days. I came up sooner than I had intended. A good post was offered to me, if I could enter upon its occupation at once. My late chief let me off; he has been very good to me: I have discovered since I came up that it was he that got me this offer. He has so overwhelmed me with kindness, that I have been wondering whether I have behaved quite well to him.'

'What!' said Isabel. 'You think he has deliberately set himself to heap coals of fire on your head?' And she looked at him mischievously.

'Oh no,' said he, suffused with her look. 'I don't mean that. But I fear I am very egotistical: I have not asked you about yourself and your fortunes.'

'Oh,' said she with a laugh, 'my fortunes are not like yours: they are without excitement. My life swings quietly—for the most part—with a reservation in her mind concerning the past day or two—between my lodgings and school, school and my lodgings. I suppose, then, you are now established as a London journalist. I hope you have done well for yourself in leaving Lancashire.'

'I am assistant-editor and leader-writer on *The Evening Banner*, and my late chief has even recommended me for the theatres on *The Non-such*, which is, as you know, a slogging weekly.'

'He seems, indeed, to be taking a kindly vengeance on you. What else has he done?' she asked with a smile. 'Has he not begged you to be so good as take his own place?'

'No,' said he. 'I will talk no more about myself. I have given myself away to you'—and he laughed, partly because of the ambiguity of his sentence—'but I did not guess you were an ironical person.'

'Did you not?' said she. 'Is it wicked to be ironical?'

'No, no,' said he; 'but if you absolutely decline to speak of yourself, lest I should be ironical, tell me about your uncles. Mr Suffield has not delighted them yet, I see, with his voice in Parliament; but Mr Raynor has lectured at the Royal Geographical. You went to the lecture, of course?'

Thus they talked as they walked along the Euston Road. Arrived at the corner of Euston Square by the St Pancras Church with its absurd caryatides, he stopped a moment and pointed

down Woburn Place. 'My lodgings,' said he, 'are down there. They are handy for the office and for the Reading Room of the British Museum. Do you ever go to the Reading Room?'

'No,' she answered, again with a spice of mischief; for a woman is never so irrepressibly mischievous as when she is pleased with her companion. 'Why should I go? I am not a literary person at all.'

'You might be if you liked,' said he; 'but I am glad you are not.'

'Why?' she asked. 'Doesn't your assistant-editorial highness not approve of female writers? Would you like to keep writing a close guild for men?'

'Oh no,' he answered to the accompaniment of a fine frank blush: being but a mere blundering male creature, he wondered at the sharpness of her speech while he liked it. 'I have no opinion on the question in general; I have only a feeling as to particular instances. I have met a few women that write, and I had rather not meet them again: that's all.'

Then there began to flow in the mind of each a current of speculation and desire beneath the matters to which they were apparently giving their attention and of which they were talking. 'Here,' thought Ainsworth, 'is the pleasantest, sweetest, most delightful comrade a man could have—pleasanter, sweeter far than any male comrade; and yet, I suppose I must be cut off from her society except on certain precise and formal occasions when I may meet her in a company! I cannot ask her to drop in and see me; and she cannot—even if she wishes it—ask me to drop in and see her. Mrs Grundy and propriety forbid it, because she is a lone woman and I am a lone man!' At the same time Isabel was thinking that she had not known Ainsworth quite so frankly and buoyantly boyish before. Was it the sense of being in a wilderness of men and women who did not care one jot for his existence that gave him that touch of naive, irresponsible youthfulness? However it was, she liked his buoyancy and his boyishness, and she said to herself: 'How he would delight in my father!—and how my father would delight in him! How much good they might do each other! How stimulating each might be to the other! And yet I cannot bring them together! Can I? Can I not? Why not? Why not, indeed? Am I ashamed of my father? Do I propose to keep him always hidden? And if I do not, why should I not show him at once, at least to Mr Ainsworth, who, I am sure, will neither misunderstand him nor me?' It is a very subtle and seductive experience that—the sure and certain feeling—which is more frequently based on intuition and understanding than on reason and knowledge—that there is one person who will never misunderstand or mistake you whatever you may say or do: it is very closely akin to a fuller experience which Isabel had as yet no notion she was beginning to undergo.

Isabel, as we have seen, was a young lady who, when she had decided that a course was right, did not review and re-review her decision, and thus postpone action till the ebb of feeling.

'Mr Ainsworth,' said she, 'have you ever heard me speak of my father?'

'Your father!' exclaimed Ainsworth. 'I did

not know you had a father! I mean, of course, that I had always supposed he was dead.'

'He has been virtually dead for many years—dead to me and to my aunt and uncles since I was a baby. Some other time I will tell you all about it. "He was dead, but is alive again," she said, quoting but half-consciously the sacred words; "he was lost, and is found." Yesterday I found him; I am just come from him now; and I am going to bring him to live with me—without, for the present, telling my uncles or my aunt anything about it.'

'It is very noble, and beautiful, and filial of you!' said Ainsworth.

'No, no,' said she; 'it is not. Don't use such absurd adjectives. I am merely doing it because I like to do it.'

'But,' said he, 'though it is not for me to question what you propose to do, may I suggest that you may not have considered all the trouble and—distress that it may entail?'

'I have considered all that,' said she. 'I know what you are thinking of. But he is not a bad man, or a gross man. He is a clever, gentle creature—my poor father!—simple, weak, and docile as can be. You remember Coleridge and his besetting weakness? Well, my father is something like Coleridge. The habit that has ruined him is the same, and his cleverness is of the same kind too. He is coming to me to-morrow, and I want to ask you to do me a favour: come and see him sometimes, and talk to him. He is very interesting, I think: he used to be an editor, and he writes still a little, and he and you may find each other good company; at anyrate, I am sure it will cheer and encourage him to find a young man interested in him.'

'My dear Miss Raynor,' said Ainsworth—and in his impulsive fervour he had to put a restraint on himself not to seize and press Isabel's hand: he grasped and pressed his own instead—'whatever I can do, I will do; but do not use the word favour in connection with it. It will be a precious privilege to please you, and to do anything for your father.'

'Thank you,' said she simply: his fervour made her somewhat shy. 'I am hoping,' she continued, 'to cure him gradually of his habit.'

'You will,' exclaimed Ainsworth in the fullest belief—'you will!'

'And, of course,' said she, 'you understand that all this is for the present a secret.'

'I understand,' said he. 'And—and I appreciate your having taken me into your confidence.'

'This,' said she, stopping at a little gate—the number of which Ainsworth eagerly noted—'is where I lodge. Good-bye.'

She gave him her hand and smiled frankly on him, so that he was penetrated through and through with delight. He looked back after he had turned away, and at the same instant she glanced over her shoulder. She smiled and nodded to him, and he raised his hat and went on, ravished with her charm. Never, he thought, had there been so spirited a poise of head and neck as that she showed when she turned; never, certainly, had he seen so divine and entrancing a smile—a smile that had been all for him!—and never, surely, had there been in all the world a kinder, sweeter, more fascinating, or more beau-

tiful woman than she! The red gold of sunset was glowing behind him as he walked away, and he murmured to himself:

'Rosy is the West, rosy is the South;  
Roses are her cheeks, and a rose her mouth!'

## HOW THEY TELEGRAPH.

SEVERAL years' practice as a telegraphist in Her Majesty's Post-office so fixes the telegraphic code in the mind that the manipulating of the various instruments becomes almost mechanical, and their signals, to the stranger so mysterious, are as intelligible to the operator as the words of an ordinary conversation. I well remember, however, that for a considerable time after I entered the 'service' the 'spirit-rappings' of the bells and sounders were so much jargon to my understanding, and certainly irritating and confusing to my ears. It takes some time to become acquainted with the different kinds of instruments, and long uninterrupted practice before they can be operated with ease and rapidity. When you enter the service as a telegraph learner, you are kindly presented with a card which contains a faithful representation of the English alphabet as you were taught it at school, with the addition of a number of mysterious dots and dashes, which you are given to understand are the telegraphic signs for the letters; but if these are supposed to be shorter than the letters themselves, you are inclined to think that it is on the principle of the old woman's ideas of brevity, who had a son named John, but 'they called him Johnny for short.' The alphabet card of signs is like the following:

A --	N --	1 -----
B ---	O ---	2 -----
C ---	P ---	3 -----
D --	Q ---	4 -----
E .	R ---	5 -----
F ---	S ---	6 -----
G ---	T --	7 -----
H ---	U ---	8 -----
I ..	V ---	9 -----
J ---	W ---	0 -----
K ---	X ---	. . . . .
L ---	Y ---	
M ---	Z ---	

You are to commence to fix these signs on your memory, and for this purpose are allowed to practise them on a 'dummy' instrument, with two keys like two escaped piano keys, that have widened themselves, and flattened themselves, and blackened themselves in the process of escaping from their legitimate sphere.

You quickly learn that all the dot signals are to be struck with the left key, and all the dash signals with the right. Therefore, the letter E is represented by one stroke of the left key; the letter T by one stroke of the right; while A is a combination of the two. Three taps on the left mean S, while three on the right mean O, and so on. Learning this alphabet is a slow business at first, and the learner generally makes it about ten times more laborious than is necessary by pressing down the keys as though he were playing on them with his feet, or by working them in jerks as though his arms were afflicted with spasms.

The alphabet is gone over again and again and again until facility is acquired. When I was learning, the dots and dashes haunted me all day long, and through the night they disturbed my sleep. Whenever my hands were at liberty, they were tapping away for very life. Was I at the dinner-table waiting to be served? my knife and fork became the two 'keys.' Was I seated in the arm-chair? the left arm became a 'dot,' the right one a 'dash,' and I gradually made the polish fade by the interminable messages I signalled on that old arm-chair. The keys of the piano afforded a splendid method of practice of an evening, and though a tune on two notes is liable to become somewhat monotonous when repeated for the thousandth time, yet it could be varied, you know, by selecting two different keys about every half-hour. Needless to say the family became highly educated in classical music, and were supremely delighted with my performance: at the same time it is but honest to add that they wished it were a harmonium instead of a piano, as then I could have pursued my studies in silence, unless, indeed, I were so stupid as to 'signal' on the pedals with my feet as well as on the keys with my fingers.

When you have learned to tickle the keys in this way, you have by no means finished. You may then be able to *send* a message fairly well, but unless you can *receive* the signals also, you are no good in a telegraph room. Now, receiving a message is an altogether different matter. You may have to take it from a Needle, or from a Bell, or from a Sounder, or from a Morse, and hence you have to learn four different methods of speaking, or hearing, the same language.

The Needle instrument possesses a dial the size of a mantel-clock face, in the centre of which is suspended a piece of metal, tapering at each end, and technically called a 'needle.' As the message is signalled to you by some fellow playing on the keys at the distant station in the way that has been named, the needle swings from side to side between two ivory pegs—perhaps they are bone—and you have got to transpose these swinging motions into an intelligible message, it may be either describing a dog-fight or a wedding; it may be ordering oysters for supper or sending somebody to Timbuctoo. When the needle swings to the left, you are to understand it means a 'dot;' when it swings to the right, a 'dash' is indicated; so that your alphabet is then read by *sight* instead of by touch, and when a quick operator is working the instrument, the 'waggles' of the needle are decidedly hysterical, and, to a stranger, utterly incomprehensible.

The learner generally takes the needle instrument first; and I have not yet forgotten—though then but a mere boy—the pride with which I succeeded in reading my first message without assistance, and if I did ask a man to 'send the corn in his own *socks*,' I detected it in time to save myself from getting the *sack*. To make myself complete master of this instrument, I remember I procured a Hudson's dry soap-box, chiselled out a circular piece near the top, and filled up the cavity with a cardboard disc, in the centre of which I pivoted a needle made of tin. I ran a sort of axle from the needle to the back of the box, and on this fixed a crosspiece, attaching to each end of it a bit of elastic; and

these in turn to two wooden keys, which I had persuaded—by some contrivance I now forget, but which at the time I thought highly ingenious—to spring up and down at a touch; and although their motions were something akin to those of the celebrated Spring-heeled Jack, yet it served my purpose, and enabled me to 'telegraph' to my heart's content, at the fireside at home, all kinds of imaginary messages to the four corners of the earth. Had I had to pay for them at a shilling apiece, which was the rate at that time, the fortune of the Inland Revenue would have been made, and the necessity of taxation abolished for all time.

The Bell instrument is to be read by the *ear*. Two little hammers—one on the left, and the other on the right—tap a small metal plate as the distant keys are played, and the message is conveyed by not altogether unmusical sounds; one stroke of the bell on the left meaning E, while one stroke of the bell on the right indicates T. The incessant tapping of these bells in a busy office is another thing to which the embryo telegraphist has to become accustomed; while, when a score of such instruments are clicking at once, one can easily understand that the noise resembles that made in a small factory. Sometimes it is so great that the clerk is glad to stick his head between the bells, so that the hammers are close to his left and right ear respectively, while his writing pad is almost under his nose, and he is straining every nerve to keep up with the terrific operator at the other end, for an expert telegraphist can wire a message at a very high speed on a Bell instrument. In rough and windy weather, several wires running in the same direction will clash together, and then, oh, the utter jargon, the vexatious, irritating sounds that these bells give forth! They are instantly put out of tune and temper, as may easily be imagined, when several messages, instead of minding their own business, and running respectably along their own wires, are chumming together on *one* line, and dancing a jig or singing *Auld Lang Syne* with crossed hands.

The next instrument to be acquired may be the Sounder, and here the learner has almost to begin over again, for, instead of having two keys on which to play his little tunes, he is provided with only one. He is told that to signal a dot he must touch the key very lightly, and to denote a dash a little more heavily. Hence, the same code of signals is available, for a light tap indicates E, while a more decided one signifies T. Three light strokes mean S, while three heavy ones cry O! Of course, facility in the use of this key is only attained after a considerable amount of practice, but, once secured, the operator rattles away without a thought, and makes his light and heavy signals with as much ease as an expert phonographer does the light and heavy strokes of shorthand. To receive a message on the Sounder, the ear requires to be trained to the same thing—that is to say, it must at once detect between light and heavy sounds, for the rapid strokes made by the vertical motion of a small brass rod are the only signals he receives. A light sound says E; a heavy one means T; and when a 'demon' sender is at the other end of the line, your reporter, in trying to keep up with a rapid speaker, is 'not in it,' for,



in telegraphy, every word has to be written out at full length in longhand, and the operator has to listen to his oracle amid the click and clatter of a score of other vociferous jabbering machines.

Then there is the Morse instrument, which is perhaps the prettiest of all, for, while you send your message with one key precisely in the same way as in the case of the Sounder, in receiving a message you have it actually written out for you in black and white—no, not black and white, but black and blue (perhaps it is black and blue through being struck so much). A narrow ribbon of blue paper unwinds itself from the instrument, and by an ingenious yet simple arrangement the signals from the small brass rod, instead of having to be read by sound, are made to mark themselves by printers' ink on to the ribbon; and the telegraphist, seated at the desk, holds one end of the ribbon in his left hand, and by practice draws it gradually along before his eyes, at the same time rapidly reading the dots and dashes, and translating them into 'good old English,' for the benefit of the individual to whom the familiar pink form is to be directed. Thus the dots and dashes of the learner's card are here reproduced by the faithful Morse, and simply require translating into longhand.

It is easy to understand that the addition or omission of a single dot or dash could very soon alter the whole tenor of a message, and the clerk not only requires to read his message correctly as from the signals, but also with intelligence, so as to avoid sense being converted into nonsense. Nevertheless, mistakes do occasionally escape detection; yet, when a word may be so easily altered, it is remarkable that so few blunders do occur, for ---- --, which means 'bad,' could be easily turned into 'dead,' thus: ---- --, and consequently the message, 'Your Uncle John is bad,' being received as 'Your Uncle John is dead,' is not at all surprising. 'We got the twins this morning' (---- --), would not have been so alarming if the telegraphist had signified that they had received 'twigs' (---- --). The man who ordered his 'cap' (---- --) to meet him at the station, was enraged when he found his trap (---- --) was not in waiting. While the other man who sent for his 'pig' (---- --) was fortunately understood to mean his 'gig' (---- --).

When the telegraph learner has mastered the Morse instrument, he is surprised to find that a message can be sent and received on it at one and the same time on the same wire—that is to say, a telegram may be travelling from London to Brighton, and another, of a totally different nature, from Brighton to London, on the self-same wire, yet with no clashing or intermingling. When this is done it is termed duplex working; but quadruplex is still more amazing, for four messages can be flashing along the same wire at the same instant without interfering with each other in the least.

Then there is the Wheatstone instrument to become acquainted with. Here, again, something new has to be learned, for three keys confront the operator, and they are manipulated, not by pressure, but by striking them with a small rubber-tipped mallet or punch. The three keys are like typewriter keys, but with rather larger

surfaces, and these are struck merely to prepare the message for transmission. The left key signifies a dot, and the right one a dash, but the middle key must be invariably struck after each letter, just as a typist strikes the space bar after each word. A white paper ribbon passes through this instrument behind the keys, and as they are manipulated, they perforate small holes in the ribbon, until, when the message is finished, the white spotless paper is found to be crowded with hundreds of thousands of tiny holes. But the message has not yet left the office. To send it to its destination the white ribbon thus prepared must be placed in an instrument called a Wheatstone Transmitter. Here it rushes between two small brass rollers at a speed which can be regulated from fifty to four hundred words per minute (where are ye, brave stenographers?), and, strange to say, at the distant station a paper ribbon comes out of their instrument at an equally high rate of speed, but with all the signals converted into the familiar dots and dashes again, as in the Morse instrument just named. The Wheatstone instruments, which are capable of working at such a high speed, are generally used for press messages, long speeches of several columns in length being flashed all over the country, in many cases to half-a-dozen widely separated towns at once, at a rate very much faster than that at which they were uttered; so that it is possible, by the reporter sending the transcript of his notes of the first part of a speech immediately to the telegraph office, to have it pouring into the editor's room at a newspaper office hundreds of miles away before the speaker has finished his address, and the first portion of his speech may be actually set up in type before he has concluded his remarks. The speech, perforated on the ribbon in the way named, may be rapidly despatched to half-a-dozen towns by means of one Wheatstone instrument; and then the same ribbon, without further preparation, may be placed in another Wheatstone, connected with a different group of towns, and signalled to them with equal facility. Thus the Queen's Speech or any other item of public importance is flashed to all parts of the kingdom within a few minutes of being made known.

## THE SQUIRE'S DILEMMA.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

MR LANGLAND, of Langland Manor, was not so young as he had been. To many, that may sound a ridiculous truism; but to others, who know that in sentiment and hope, in all that gives value to youth, a man is often younger at five-and-forty than he was at five-and-twenty, it will not appear absurd. At a certain spring-time Mr Langland was at least thirty years older than he had been ten years before. One morning in particular, as he tramped steadily along the narrow footpath over the swelling expanse of arable that crowned his estate, he looked as if he were about done with life altogether, as if he expected nothing more in this world, and were extremely uncertain whether there were another. When he had surmounted the rise of the ground, he stopped and looked about him, tapped his

gaiter with his stick, as in the sharp impatience of pain, bit his lip hard—there seemed a sob swelling in his throat—threw out nods around him, as if he were counting the points of the compass, and finally let his head sink, as in the utter perplexity of despair.

All that was observed by a man on the other side of the hedge close by, who stroked a very thin Roman nose with a white and lean forefinger, and raised and dropped his gray bushy eyebrows, as if he would say: 'Ah, that's how he feels about it! Well, now, let me see.' With the impressive 'Hem!' of an unctuous preacher, he pushed aside the straggling, overgrown tops of the hedge and sidled through a gap. The Squire turned quickly, and a new shade passed upon his afflicted face, as of suspicion and dislike, when he saw the man.

'Mr Purvey,' he murmured, not at all by way of greeting, but in a tone of assent to a disagreeable fact. Then, as if recollecting his manners, he added: 'Good-morning.'

'Good-morning, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey. 'A sweet morning—is it not? "He maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good."'

'Yes,' growled the Squire in assent. He looked sideways, as if he suspected there was a personal reference in the quotation, and let his look linger a moment up and down the half-clerical garb of Mr Purvey—his black coat and his white shirt front and neckcloth. "And," continued the Squire, "sendeth His rain upon the just and upon the unjust."

'Quite so,' said Mr Purvey, smiling approval. 'This now'—and he turned round and indicated with his stick the neglected, rain-swept furrows, among which couch-grass and weeds and thistles ran riot—'and that'—pointing down at a rich bottom dotted with sheep and lambs—'are illustrations of the way His blessings and His chastisements are received by the two kinds of people. This land turns sour and unproductive and wild with such weather as it does not like; that green bottom is grateful for all weathers, and turns all to advantage and profit.'

'You're too fine and—and figurative for me,' said the Squire with a touch of bitterness in his tone. 'All I know is that that bottom and this upland arable, both o' them, like best what's best for them—a mixture of rain and shine. The bottom, of course, thrives best with more wet than shine; and this arable with more shine than wet. This field, sir, that used to be the finest sight the parish could show, with its straight furrows of rich, sweet loam spread out to sun and shower, has been having for years more wet than human clay can endure, and so it is as you see it—lying—er—fallow, sir.'

'So like the worldly man!' said Mr Purvey, extending his hand and speaking with a roll of rhetorical complacency.

'Eh?' said the Squire with a sudden turn.

'I mean this fallow field'—with an emphasis on 'fallow.'—The Squire looked ruefully round on the land, which now needed all an auctioneer's imagination to pass it off as 'arable.'—'That bottom,' continued Mr Purvey, 'takes the reverses that have made this field so fallow and turns them to the richest uses.'

'You are talking nonsense, Mr Purvey. Excuse me. But that bottom likes all the wet we've

been having as little as this field, though it does not show it so much on the outside. That bottom is as sodden as a sponge; it's sour and rotten, and those sheep on it have, every one of them, got foot-rot.'

'Ah, well,' said Mr Purvey; 'I didn't know that.'

'Of course you didn't. How should you?'

The Squire looked conscious of having the best of what argument there had been.

Mr Purvey considered him, and suddenly facing him, said: 'Well, I hope—indeed, I think—this fine day'—looking up and around—'is promise of a better season for us. Let us have faith, at anyrate. And if you will kindly look in upon me this afternoon, I daresay we shall be able to arrange this business of ours to the satisfaction of both of us.'

Mr Purvey held out his hand. The Squire took it and looked at him in brightening surprise: he felt as if suddenly ushered from the gloom and closeness of a small room into the open fresh air.

'About three,' said Mr Purvey. 'Will that do?'

'Very well,' said the Squire, becoming very red, and giving Mr Purvey's hand a grip which made his eyelids tremble. 'I'm obliged to you, Mr Purvey.'

'Not at all,' said Mr Purvey; 'by no means.'

So they parted. Mr Purvey turned off along the cart-track to the left, while the Squire continued on the path he had been pursuing before his conversation with Purvey. The Squire swung along at a sharp pace for a few yards, and then he suddenly drew up, and looked after the black, spare figure with its hands crossed behind, as if to keep them from doing harm. Could it be that Purvey meant mischief? The benevolent intention he seemed to have towards the Squire's distress was not at all in keeping with what the Squire and the Squire's neighbours had judged to be his character.

Let me explain.

Purvey—whose name is celebrated to all the world by 'Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids'—was a man of sixty or so, who had dwelt, at intervals, on the confines of the Langland property for three years. He had bought a pleasant little freehold farm of one hundred acres, which the auctioneers had advertised in the London papers as 'a charming residential estate; he had pulled down the old farmhouse, and built himself, on the top of the hill, where it could not be hid, a gaunt abomination of a villa in concrete, which everybody either laughed or shuddered at. That first unfavourable impression of himself he deepened by opposing the very High, but the very popular, vicar of the parish, and intensified by holding 'Revival Services' in a galvanised iron Mission Room which he had reared on his own property. His black coat, his glib tongue, and his familiar address, and most of all his reputation for vast wealth, drew aside even the elect of the rustics. Yet, notwithstanding these differences, Purvey had been early received as a casual visitor at Langland Manor. His little property 'marched' with Mr Langland's, and he would walk over to the Manor House to discuss with the easy Squire questions of common fences and ditches, saying: 'Don't

you trouble about the cost. You've enough to do, I know, in these bad times, without putting up new fences. But new fences, you see, are a hobby with me, and I may as well spend a few pounds on them as on anything else.' Moreover, Mrs Langland, a gentle, religious soul, came to like a talk with Mr Purvey: his evangelical conversation did her good, she said; and her husband was not the man to say her 'nay' in anything. Then the good lady fell ill, and during her illness Mr Purvey sent her supplies of his Patent Food. It was not a great matter, but the Squire took it as kindly meant: it won his heart more than a greater service would have done. But soon the greater service came also, such a service as must either bind one man closely to another, or totally disserve them.

Mrs Langland died; and on her death the Squire—for reasons we need not trouble about here—found himself in greater difficulties than even bad seasons and vacant farms could be responsible for. Somehow, Mr Purvey got wind of these difficulties, and offered to buy the Fairfield Farm—that on which we have just seen the pair—which ran with his own little estate, and which probably was desirable in his eyes for other reasons. Then the Squire had to explain that he could not sell the Fairfield Farm, because, in law, it was not his: it had belonged to his wife, and the right to it was transmitted to his eldest daughter, Kitty. Upon that Mr Purvey offered to lend the Squire, with his daughter's consent, six thousand pounds on a mortgage of the farm; and the Squire had eagerly accepted the offer.

The mortgage had been effected two years before the date I am writing of, but the Squire had no prospect of redeeming it; no, nor even of paying the interest, in connection with which was a circumstance that made him angry, when he thought of it. At the end of the first year, Purvey had said, when the £240 of interest was almost due: 'About that mortgage, Mr Langland—you've had scarcely time to turn round yet: suppose we let both mortgage and interest slide until next year.' And the Squire had foolishly let the matter slide, and now there was a sum of about £480 due for interest alone! He was dejected, desperate, and suspicious—suspicious that Mr Purvey had led him into a trap. And he was the more angrily inclined to suspicion, that during the past year Purvey had taken several opportunities of letting him know he had a very promising son of a marriageable age. What! a family alliance with 'Purvey's Patent Food for Infants and Invalids'? The vulgar, money-grubbing, hypocritical son of a vulgar, money-grubbing, hypocritical father marry his Kitty? It may be called *a priori* prejudice, but the Squire sincerely believed that the son must deserve these epithets as much as he believed the father deserved them; and he resolved that his Kitty's feelings should not be outraged by such an alliance, though the heavens should fall. And the Squire's heaven seemed very likely to fall; for he had no prospect of paying either mortgage or its accumulated interest, and Purvey, if offended, might foreclose.

'Now, what does he mean?' thought the Squire, as he looked after Purvey. "If you will kindly look in this afternoon—I daresay we can arrange

this business—to the satisfaction of both of us?"

'To the satisfaction of both of us:' these were certainly Purvey's words; and Mr Langland as he trudged home kept repeating them to himself—drawing them out, as it were, like an ear-trumpet, and hearing Purvey's voice through them; or like a spy-glass, and seeing Purvey's black back and crossed hands through them.

It began to rain before he reached home; but yet he went to the Home Farm and tramped about the out-buildings, absently looking at and feeling cows and pigs, while he dreamed of what he might do if 'the agricultural depression' would only lift, if the heavens would only be propitious, and cease their persecution of him and his with rain and murrain. And if—oh, if!—he had only a little more capital, what oats and barley would he not raise on that fine upland, what pork would he not breed from his favourite cross of Prince Albert and Berkshire! He felt at the moment as if he could submit to any terms from Purvey to be freed from that chain and clog of pecuniary trouble which he had so long dragged about with him. But when he went indoors and bethought him how cheerful and patient his girls had been under the abridgment of their small luxuries—and under even the reduction of the household—when he saw his bright, beautiful eldest daughter, Kitty, standing in the pantry shelling peas, with her sleeves turned up from her white arms, and with a big white apron before her—he swore a big oath, which relieved him considerably, that never—come what would—would he permit his girl to be saddened and degraded by an unbecoming alliance!

At three o'clock, Langland and Purvey sat facing each other in what was called the library of the concrete villa. Purvey moved a paper or two about, took up an old quill, and began to mend and dress it, and said: 'Well, Mr Langland—he had not arrived at the familiarity of dropping the 'mister'—'what about this mortgage? I need not remind you that you have already had the legal notice, and that I can demand repayment this day week.'

'I know you can,' said the Squire, with his hand firmly closed on the head of his stick.

'Well, now, what about it? Am I right, for instance, in guessing—merely, a suspicion, a guess, you know—that you are not prepared, that you do not expect to be prepared, to redeem it next week?'

'You are right, Mr Purvey,' said the Squire. 'I am not prepared yet, nor do I expect to be prepared in a week, to redeem.'

'When do you expect to be prepared, Mr Langland?' asked Purvey with a sidelong look.

'Pon my soul, Mr Purvey, I don't know!' exclaimed the Squire. 'I don't even see any way of paying you the two years' interest. I can manage one with a pinch, but the two!'—He shook his head.—'I thought, Mr Purvey, that we might come to some—some arrangement.'

'Well,' said Mr Purvey, laying down the mended quill and taking up another, 'the fact is, Mr Langland, that I ought not to leave the money out any longer. I can apply it in my business; and to be strictly business-like—as one must be in these days—I ought to put it into the

business, where it will make its fifteen per cent. instead of four.'

The Squire's heart sank. He saw hope slipping far out of his reach; he imagined Purvey already in possession of Fairfield Farm—of Kitty's inheritance!—and he was conscious of a difficulty of utterance.

'Is that an alternative you present to me, Mr Purvey?' at last he said—'to pay fifteen per cent. Nine hundred pounds of interest every year? I couldn't do it! It is completely beyond my power!'

'I have not asked that you should, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey, with a fiercely genial smile. 'I have only suggested that the money *could* be so applied both to the benefit of the business and of myself: a good business man would so apply it; but I am not a good business man: I have other interests besides business; and I do not propose to withdraw it from you and apply it to the business. That is not my alternative. But I *have* an alternative.' Mr Purvey in mending the pen in his hand split it right up and rendered it useless. He threw it away, and clasping his hands on the table, leaned forward, and looked at the Squire. 'I *have* an alternative,' he repeated.

'May I beg to know,' said the Squire, in an agitation which he could ill conceal, 'what it is?'

'I have a son, Mr Langland,' said Mr Purvey; 'he is a worthy young man, sir—an excellent young man, though I doubt whether his feet are yet set in the way of the Kingdom. You have a daughter, Mr Langland—a dear girl, a sweet girl, a girl with a gentle and gracious disposition, though it may be she also is still unregenerate.'

'(Confound his impudence!' thought the Squire.) 'Will it not be wise, Mr Purvey,' he said aloud, 'to let these questions of religion alone? We may not agree upon them.'

Mr Purvey smiled, and opened his hands with a gentle deprecatory wave.

'Your daughter and my son, Mr Langland, might find grace together. My son, with the fortune he will inherit, might reasonably hope to make a better match—from a worldly point of view, I mean,' he added hurriedly; for an ominous frown and an involuntary flush had appeared on the Squire's face. 'But I had rather, Mr Langland, he married your daughter, Miss Kitty, without a penny, than another girl with fifty thousand pounds. If you can see your way to that, Mr Langland, then the mortgage may run till Doomsday—whenever that may be—at one and a half per cent.' And he smiled pleasantly and cracked his fingers, as if he had made a joke of a very agreeable kind.

'You flatter me—and my daughter,' said the Squire, pulling his beard roughly, to subdue or disguise the look of indignation and ferocity which he was sure must be upon his face. 'But,' he continued, 'you forget, Mr Purvey, that neither I nor my daughter has ever seen your son.'

'You will soon, however, have an opportunity of seeing him. He has been abroad for several years. He is a—— Well, yes,' said Purvey mysteriously, when apparently he was on the point of declaring the occupation or profession

of his son, 'he is as clever a fellow as you'll meet with in a day's journey, Mr Langland. I have written for him to get leave of absence and to come home, and I expect to have him here in three months or so. Then you shall see him, Mr Langland.'

'You will understand, then,' said the Squire, quick to perceive that he might escape from his position with temper and dignity, 'that I can say nothing about the matter you have proposed to me until we have made the acquaintance of your son. You would not have me engage my daughter to—er—a man she has never seen?'

'Certainly not, Mr Langland—certainly not. They shall meet, and they are sure to like each other,' said he, stroking his thin Roman nose in the best of spirits.

A few minutes later the Squire was outside the concrete villa, angry and fuming. To subdue his discomposure, he thought he would take a roundabout way home over the breezy upland. To that end he turned across Mr Purvey's fields to reach the Fairfield Farm. He was but a few yards from the margin of the Purvey property when he came upon a square enclosure of high, close-set boards. He was wondering what that could be, when a man came out of a door in the enclosure, and through the open door he saw that there was a little wooden shanty within.

'What's this for?' he asked of the man, who was an utter stranger, and who looked grimy and oily, as if he had been attending to machinery. 'I haven't noticed this building before.'

'Boring, sir,' answered the man, somewhat curtly and sulkily.

'Boring, eh? Boring for water, I suppose?'

'Yes, sir—boring,' repeated the man, and passed on.

The Squire gave a passing glance of surprise to the fact that he had heard nothing of such an operation being in progress, and then he cast all his thought and attention on his own affairs.

#### SOME NOTES ON BONNETS.

MALE headgear has often been taken as a theme, and numberless dissertations have been written upon the beauties, advantages, and shortcomings of the 'stove-pipe' and the 'billycock'; but very few appear to have given much attention to the philosophy of Bonnets, or studied the growth and gradual development of those combinations of birds, ribbons, flowers, and feathers which now grace the heads of our fair ones. The male hat has been rendered famous by Lamb and Leigh Hunt, while Carlyle's caustic criticism upon dress generally will always remain unique in English literature. 'Clothes,' he says, 'gave us individuality, distinction, social polity; clothes have made men of us; they are threatening to make clothes-screens of us.' Indeed, in the present day it would seem as if the prophecy of Herr Teufelsdröckh bids fair to be fulfilled. 'One might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion,' to quote an old adage; and it is interesting to glance back and observe the multifarious twists and turns, alterations and additions, which have marked the history of bonnets.

The Fashion wears out more apparel than the



man,' says Shakespeare, and we have not far to seek to ascertain the abundance of this truth. But in this paper it is not our purpose to deal with the vagaries of the head-coverings of man, for wherever fashion is concerned he is but an insignificant cipher, and the sober 'silk hat' to which he so tenaciously clings is of slight consequence in comparison with the fearful and wonderful arrangement of nodding plumes and bobbing flowers which adorns the female head in this nineteenth century.

The earliest headgear of the ladies of Britain was a felt or woollen cap called *hæc* (hence our modern word hat), worn by the higher class of Anglo-Saxons; but this was quickly superseded by a hood or veil, which, falling down before, was wrapped round the neck and breast in a very inartistic manner. But not only do we owe the introduction of head-coverings to the Saxons, but in that period the ladies all used on their cheeks a red cosmetic, so that the calling in of art, in the shape of carmine and powder, to assist Nature is not the outcome of refinement, but the preservation of an ancient custom.

During the Danish and Norman periods, the head-dress altered but little in style, and it was not until the thirteenth century that the veils were of gold tissue or superbly embroidered silk, and over them were worn diadems, circlets, and garlands; whilst the wimple covered the head and shoulders, and was fastened under the chin, giving a decidedly ugly appearance. It was in this century, too, corsets were first introduced and worn over the dress.

In the reign of Edward III. hats first became general, and were constructed to resemble a coronet; but with the accession of Richard II. these were discarded; party-coloured hoods came into vogue, and Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales* describes the carpenter's wife as wearing a silk girdle, head fillet, and brooch. When the sumptuary laws were revived by Henry V., ladies adopted the expedient of covering their head-dress with a kerchief or veil, and this continued throughout the whole of the fifteenth century. Besides the heart-shaped head-dress and the Turkish turban, ladies now wore upon their heads the ugly steeple, consisting of a roll of linen covered with fine lawn, which hung to the ground or was tucked under the arm. To such an extent was this fashion carried, that it is related of Isabella of Bavaria, queen of Charles VI., that she had the doors of the palace of Vincennes altered so as to admit herself and the ladies of the court in full regalia. Caps with large wings or lappets on each side, similar to those now worn by the Normandy peasants, were also much affected at this period, and were called *bonets*, hence our word bonnet.

The novelty of the later part of the fifteenth century appears from the old chronicles to have been a curious head-dress of embroidered gold-net projecting from the back of the head, and a stiffened kerchief over it spreading out like wings, a fashion which was quickly followed by close caps and cauls, from under which the hair hung down to the waist. Elaboration seems to have commenced with the reign of Henry VIII., for head-dresses were now made of velvet, having long ear-pieces reaching down to the shoulders, and studded with pearls, jewels, and gold. Three-cornered caps of

miniver were also worn, as well as closely fitting caps reaching to the ears, known as the 'Mary-Queen-of-Scots' cap. The forms of the Elizabethan head-dress, we learn from Holinshed, were very numerous, consisting of French hoods, hats, caps, kerchiefs, cauls of net, wire, and lattice caps, as well as the ermine bonnet, the latter of which was 'forbidden to all but gentlewomen born, having arms.'

The French cap remained in fashion until the time of William III., then with the rage for false hair came the periwig; and the cap gave place to the high-crowned hat with ostrich or peacock feathers, and a sprig of yew for mourning. As the wig became the mode in the Georgian era, so did the shapes and styles of caps and hats change almost as rapidly as at the present day. Caps were at first small frilled or puffed; then came the Ranelagh mob-cap, copied from the head-kerchiefs of market-women; the Mary-Queen-of-Scots cap of black gauze edged with French beads; the fly-cap, like a butterfly, edged with garnets, topazes, or brilliants; and Goldsmith's 'Cousin Hannah's' cap, a few bits of cambric and flowers of painted paper stuck on one side of the head. Next calashes, like the head of a cabriolet, were appended to the head-dress. Following this came a flat straw or silk hat of small size, trimmed with ribbons, and worn upon the crown of the head; and afterwards a large round gypsy straw hat fastened by ribbons under the chin.

The bonnet—a century before, made of silk, velvet, or cloth—was in the time of the Georges changed to straw, for, about 1724, Gay mentions 'a new straw bonnet lined with green.' The formalities of the eighteenth century received a terrible blow by the French Revolution, and in the ten years preceding 1800, a complete change was effected in feminine head-dress. Periwigs commenced to die out; but straw bonnets, much modified, and broad-brimmed hats, trimmed with long ostrich feathers, were the mode throughout the previous half of the present century. Then came the rage for quickly changing fashion: hats and bonnets altered yearly; and in the last four decades we have had ladies wearing headgear of all conceivable shapes and sizes. There was the straw hat like an inverted saucer, and the tiny flat bonnet perched upon the high chignon after the fashion of Katharine's cap in the play:

Moulded on a porringer.

Why, 'tis a cockle, or a walnut shell,

A knuck, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap,

A custard coffin, a bauble.

They have been multiform. There was the basket hat, the turban, the flower bonnet, the becoming 'Princess,' the saucy 'Gainsborough,' the 'poke' bonnet with its hideous pea-green strings, and hundreds, nay thousands, of others, that have been in vogue for a brief space, but have now 'had their day,' and been relegated to that oblivion, the capacious sack of the dealer in ladies' wardrobes.

Since the commencement of the fifteenth century, the fantasies of head-dress have been borrowed from Paris, and the *haut monde* of that city has guided the English taste exclusively, until at the present moment everything that is fashionable is French.

Fashion, however, is much more fickle nowa-

days than it was in the earlier half of the century; for whereas at that time a bonnet would be in fashion for a decade or so, and daughters frequently wore their mother's wedding dresses, in these later years the Rue de la Paix asserts its influence to cause an alteration of shapes several times each season. Both from the Parisian milliner's point of view and that of the leaders of Society, these kaleidoscopic changes are highly necessary for the reservation of style to the aristocracy. In these levelling days, as soon as a new 'model' of a hat or bonnet is introduced, the milliners of the unfashionable at once proceed to copy it, with the result that within a month or so of its appearance in Regent Street shop windows, it is worn by the denizens of the Mile End Road when upon their Sunday excursions.

Heavily as these continual changes of fashion may draw upon the purse of the humble and long-suffering husband, nevertheless they are necessary so long as it is the mission of woman to outvie her neighbour in the matter of dress. Materials in the last century were so expensive as to preclude the poor from imitating the rich; but all this has changed in this age of cheapness. Whether the present styles are more becoming than the Gainsborough of our grandmothers or the coal-scuttle of Madame Sarah Gamp, it is not our intention to dispute, it being merely a matter of taste; although we cannot refrain from asserting that many of the hats and bonnets of to-day have been brought to artistic perfection. Their lofty construction may perhaps have annoyed us when vainly endeavouring to obtain a glimpse of the performers at matinees, concerts, and other such gatherings; but fashion delights in extremes, and it is therefore satisfactory to note that they are now worn quite as low as a year ago they were high.

The bonnet is as dear to the feminine heart as the pipe to the man, with the exception that the former is most attractive when new, whilst the latter is rendered more appreciable by age; and this being so, we should neither sneer at what some are pleased to term the fickleness of the fair sex, nor begrudge them their little foibles, expensive though they may be.

### SOME HOSPITAL STORIES.

By G. E. BURGIN.

'You don't know Miss X—?'

'Never heard of her.'

'Oh, well, I'm sorry for you. But if you are interested in hospital life in a big city and the things which happen to nurses, you couldn't do better than call on Miss X—. I'll give you a letter of introduction to her. She has devoted most of her life to philanthropic objects, especially in connection with the London poor. Miss X— will give you more information in five minutes than the average nurse could provide you with in a week. Better go and see her.'

I took my friend's advice, and a letter of introduction, and called upon Miss X— at eleven one chilly November morning. Miss X—, having comforted a poor woman who complained of suffering from 'nervous nobility,' sent her away, and seeing that I was cold, proceeded to make me some delicious coffee over a

little spirit lamp in one corner of her pleasant morning-room. The room itself was gay with many-hued chrysanthemums, with pretty bits of old china, and quaint Japanese hangings. Behind the curtains were lint bandages, stores of necessities, &c.; but I only became aware of these when something was wanted in a hurry and the curtains were withdrawn. When Miss X— had disposed of another visitor whose complaint was 'Father's been took bad agin,' she sat down in a comfortable arm-chair, and proceeded to tell me stories just as they came into her head or were prompted by my desultory questionings.

Yes (she said); many girls come to hospitals as nurses after having had some momentary tiff with the objects of their affections. One pretty girl brought matters to a crisis in this way. Her lover had been hanging fire for a long time. Suddenly, she conceived it to be her duty to give up balls and costly dresses and to become a nurse. She went away without a farewell to her lover, who became frantic when he learned that he had probably lost her for ever. At last he was allowed to see her—in her nurse's costume. Her eyes wore a look of chastened resignation; her pretty print dress fitted without a wrinkle; her cuffs and collar were of the snowiest; he thought her an angel of goodness. She stayed a fortnight, and asked us all to the wedding, which took place at St George's, Hanover Square.

After she went, we had a very highly-strung, nervously exalted girl, who wanted three months' hospital training before becoming a missionary's wife and going out to do zenana work in India. But she didn't have much time to learn nursing. Her relations continually came to weep over her and exhibit her to friends, who, in their turn, insisted on the poor girl showing them all the 'interesting cases.' The friends and relatives would keep asking heads of wards if such saints often came there, and wanted to know why she wasn't put in a glass case or wrapped up in cotton wool. I warned the poor girl that she was not fit to go to India; but she went, and died three months after of climate and nervous excitement.

The next probationer was 'Our Lady of the Jonquils.' Her peculiarity was that she wore jonquils at all seasons, and was so distractingly pretty that most of the patients fell in love with her. When it came to her pinning part of a bunch of jonquils on a good-looking young fellow's dressing-gown, and putting the others in her hair, it was thought better that she should return to 'her people.'

'Cinderella,' her successor, was an exceedingly handsome, olive-skinned girl with picturesque tendencies. She could not endure cold, and every morning sat with her feet in the hot ashes of the fireplace when she first came on duty. In a cotton frock, she looked draggled and pinched with cold and was not at all effective; but, later in the day, she had a habit of twisting an Oriental handkerchief in her dark hair and looking like an Eastern queen. A grateful East End patient once presented her with a new half-crown for looking 'so like King Solomink's queen of Sheba, miss.' She fastened the half-crown to her chain and wore it as long as she stayed with us.

Of course, nurses are forbidden to take money

from the patients. Though twopence is a large sum to poor East End patients, a child once gave me sixpence. 'Mother says you've saved my life, and you must have it.' She turns a mangle, and when she'd turned that sixpence she said: 'Thank the Lord for this; now we can get her something good.' Another grateful patient once brought me an art peacock—green on a yellow ground—to put on my chair. I endured that antimacassar until one of the patients said it gave him homicidal mania, and the ward surgeon had it taken away in order to prevent a catastrophe.

I have frequently numbered policemen among my patients, and like them very much; they are so amenable to discipline when in hospital. One burly fellow was knocked down by a wagon and lost both his legs. He took a most philosophical view of the situation. 'No more rain dripping down my legs on winter nights, nurse. The Government's got to provide for me now.' It was necessary that he should be kept very quiet; but so many of his friends in the 'Force' would drop in at all hours to see how he was getting on, that we had to forbid their coming at all. After a few days, their anxiety to see him overcame their obedience to orders, and they conquered the difficulty by getting passes and coming in plain clothes. But there was no disguising their ponderous walk.

After my policeman recovered and was fitted with what he called 'a be-yew-tiful pair of wooden stumps,' I nursed an amorous platelayer through an attack of inflammation of the lungs. When he recovered, he proposed to me, and couldn't understand 'wot you wants to go aworkin' like that 'ere for, when you might marry a decent chap with two quid a week.' He was greatly dejected at being refused, and hung round the hospital for weeks after his discharge, blowing kisses up at the matron's window (he mistook it for mine) with maudlin tenderness.

The platelayer was succeeded by an Irishman. I never knew Irishmen lose their power of 'blarney.' When fairly convalescent, this one was allowed to get up for two hours a day every afternoon. The first day, he enjoyed it very much. On the next day I found Denis strolling about the ward in the early morning and making himself generally useful, but watching me from the corner of his eye all the time. 'Denis, Denis, this won't do.' 'Ah, shure, miss, I had to get up to look at you!'—'But you're to be up for two hours in the afternoon.' 'Shure, miss, it's always afternoon till I see your swate face foreinist the door!' And then I hadn't the heart to make him go to bed again. But he wasn't really so trying as an idiot boy, who was so fond of me that he ate my photograph.

Then I had a sailor, who called himself Jack Johnson; but I don't think that was his real name. He had broken his leg through an awkward fall over a coil of rope on a slippery deck. Johnson was a very nice patient—clean, and obedient to rules, and always good for a merry tale. But when the gas was lowered at night, he often talked in more serious fashion. 'I belongs to a respectable north-country family of decent God-fearing folks, with more fear than love about 'em altogether,' he told me in a moment of confidence. 'I couldn't stand the everlasting prayer-meetings

and the miserable Sundays, and used to shirk all I could. But it didn't do. They preached at me, morning, noon, and night, and promised me eternal punishment in any case. So, thinks I to myself, if I'm to be eternally in disgrace here, and eternally punished hereafter, I'll try and deserve it all.'

I was interested in spite of myself—the lad's reckless, bitter talk was so at variance with his honest blue eyes and sunshiny smile—and listened to the account of his running away to sea. He did not know whether any attempt had been made to track him, and had never heard one word from home for over six years.

When discharged from the hospital, he insisted on leaving me some curious shells, strung into a necklace; and when I objected, he coolly remarked: 'You'd better have 'em. You've been wonderful patient with me; and I reckon you're a good woman. There's a many that isn't that, worse luck for us. If you won't have the shells, I shall know you think I'm past praying for, and I'll chuck 'em into the gutter the first minute I gets outside.'

Months after, he sent me a misspelt, ill-written letter from his mother, telling of her thankfulness to 'them as cared for my boy.' There was also a postscript, in printed letters, from my *protégé*, saying he had not forgotten my advice, but had gone home. His mother and father were very much broken; but, please God, he'd look after them now, and they were free to own they had kept too tight a hand on him. 'You told me, straight, I'd acted cruel to 'em, nurse, and you're right.'

One evening, the patients' tea was cleared away, and they were chatting cheerfully amongst themselves, when the door opened, and a tall, handsome girl was introduced to us as 'The New Probationer!' The new probationer earnestly and thoroughly applied herself to each day's duties. In spite of her queenly carriage, she could make a bed admirably, and gave every promise of becoming an excellent surgical nurse. Still, she puzzled me. The girl never referred to her past or spoke of her future, and her reserve seemed strange in so young a woman, for she always appeared to be putting a strong restraint on her natural high spirits. One night, a girl was brought in who was dying from the effect of a railway accident. When she opened her eyes, they remained fixed on our probationer, who stood at a little distance from the door. I fetched the probationer to speak to the patient, when, to my surprise, a shrill cry broke from the sufferer, and our young nurse dropped on the chair by the bedside, exclaiming in an agitated voice: 'Oh Lizzie, Lizzie, is it really you?' The girl died that night. A few days later, I happened to be at work in my own room when our stately probationer entered.

'Can you spare me a few moments, Sister? I'm going away.' Before I could answer, she was down on her knees by my chair, sobbing on my shoulder as if her heart would break. 'I want to tell you,' she cried, 'about Lizzie, the woman who died the other night. It was all my fault she came by that train; she would never have left her home if I had not run away from mine. She was always a good girl, only rather wilful, and vexed her father because she

wanted to make a foolish marriage. At last, she said, no one cared for her, and even I, who was always her friend, had gone away and forgotten her. It's such a dull little village where we live, you know, Sister, and the people gossip and worry one. Lizzie was always being told she ought to give the man up. The end of it was that Lizzie had a great quarrel with her father, and started off in a rage to join an aunt and cousin, who are dressmakers in some rather poor neighbourhood near London. Then came the railway accident, and you know the rest.'

'Not quite all, I think. Why are you going to leave us?'

'Because,' she answered, 'I have no right to be here. My father did not wish me to come. My mother is dead, and my step-mother is an exasperating invalid; but I'm just going home to make the best of her! Perhaps she will be easier to live with when I go back again. If I had stayed at home and done my own duty, that poor girl might be still alive.'

So she went back to her duty, married happily, and is continually sending me things for my poor people.

Some of the old men are very reluctant to leave a hospital when cured. 'Oh nurse, can't you tell me how to stay in? I've tried all the other places, but this is the best, and I want to stay. I ain't wanted at home. There's no room for the likes of me. The house is too small, and I'm in the way. My friends will raise a trifle every month, if you'll only let me stay.'

Women will often come into our waiting-room just for a warm and a rest. One day I noticed a woman holding her head in her hands and moaning as if in great pain. 'What's the matter with you? Is it anything very bad?' 'Oh no, miss,' she laughed. 'I wanted a rest, and I thought you'd turn me out if I kept quiet.'

Poor people often beg for a dose of medicine in cold weather, just for the sake of getting something warm to drink. One poor old man used to ask for leave to go and see his friends every Sunday, and was driven back in a coster's barrow. 'Father allers likes to 'ave 'is reggler Sunday fit at 'ome,' the son explained; 'so we just loosens 'is 'ankercher an' lays 'im flat on the kitchen tiles till 'e comes to agin. Then we gives 'im a drop o' gin, an' drives 'im 'ome to the 'Orsepittle all werry comferable.'

I should like to take this opportunity of strongly protesting against parents allowing their children to become nurses until they are five or six and twenty, an age which has been fixed as the fitting one by a great many thoughtful men and women who have thoroughly studied the question. We began by taking any young lady who was good enough to leave home and put her time at our disposal. Now, nurses should be weeded thoroughly, so that we may get the very highest type. Nursing makes great demands on the physical strength of any young woman. Besides, there are many sights in a hospital which it is not well for young women to see.

Ladies sometimes come to the hospital and want to adopt pretty children. Once, by a little dexterous manœuvring, I persuaded a lady to adopt a very unprepossessing child. The little thing was brought to me just before Christmas, with frostbitten toes, and livid weals across her

thin shoulders. We cured her toes as well as we could, and washed her. Most of the neglect from which she had suffered was the neglect of necessity. The people who had picked up this deserted waif became too poor to keep her, and were so glad to get rid of her that they didn't trouble to come back. I found out an aunt of the child's; but when the aunt discovered the reason for my wishing to make her acquaintance, she moved, and left the waif on our hands. The girl wasn't interesting in any way. Fortunately, I remembered a certain West End lady who 'did good to her soul' by coming round the wards on Christmas Day to distribute toys. When she came, I said to her in the most heartless voice I could assume: 'Oh, this ugly little wretch is going to the workhouse to-morrow.'

She looked at me, her manner implying, 'These hospital people have no hearts at all.' 'Nurse, I can't bear to think of it,' she said.

'Yes, it is unfortunate,' I replied coldly; 'but no one wants her. She's not a nice child. Ugly, vicious, unpleasant in her habits. The workhouse will probably do her good.'

The lady began to grow indignant, but curbed herself with an effort. 'Would you do me a great favour, nurse?'

'Certainly,' I said, as if it didn't matter in the least, but all the while my heart was thumping away: 'She'll take it! She'll take it!'

'Don't. Promise me you won't let her go to the workhouse until you hear from me?'

'Oh, if you wish it.'

'I do wish it—very much. Thank you.'

Then she went away; but the upshot of it all was that she provided the child with a home in the country, paid a worthy old couple to adopt her, and gave the girl a year in which to overcome her bad habits and equally bad language. Of course, I warned the lady in question that she wasn't dealing with the customary Christmas-card child; but that only made her the more determined. It was not found necessary to send the girl to an Industrial School at the end of the year. She is now a happy, respectable young woman, with a husband and child of her own. Her patroness still thinks it a pity that 'so admirable a nurse should have so little heart.'

#### OUR GREATER SUN.

ONE soft rich glow, half roseate and half gold;

One sea of sunset glory in the sky—

Its verge invisible, its end untold—

That melts into the blue insensibly.

The source of all the gorgeous scene has met

And passed the far horizon's mystic bar,

But leaves its benediction brightening yet

The evening sky with glories spread afar.

Long years ago, another, brighter Source

Of glory passed our dim horizon line:

Nor can we see that light until, our course

Of twilight o'er, we hail the dawn divine.

Its glorious after-glow alone we see,

Until we wake, Sun of our souls, with Thee.

MARGARET KATE ULPH.

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